

Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer and George Finlay

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The collection of Finlay Papers in the British School at Athens though throwing invaluable light on the character of George Finlay and on conditions in the Greece and western Europe of his day, are by no means complete in their coverage. The diaries cover only certain years; the Letter Book records mainly family and business correspondence; the actual copies of surviving letters both to and from Finlay—apart from Finlay to Leake or Leicester Warren—seem to owe their preservation to chance rather than policy. Yet Finlay was no less interested in the history of Trebizond than in Greek topography or in numismatics, and a stray survival among his papers seems to indicate that he had closer relations with Fallmerayer than is suggested by the almost total omission of any reference to him in the works on the Fragmentist (as Fallmerayer called himself). The editor of Fallmerayer's collected works, his best friend G. M. Thomas (the 'carissimus Thomas' of the *Tagebücher*), does mention the generosity of Fallmerayer's attitude towards Finlay's work on Trebizond, but that is about all.

Fallmerayer was well known in his own day for his views on the ethnic composition of modern Greece, and his pioneer work on the history of Trebizond, as well as for his obsession with the Russian threat to contemporary Europe and his pessimistic desire for a united Germany. His dramatic enunciation in his *History of the Morea*¹ of his theory of the total absorption of the

1. *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters*, I (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1830), p. III.

ancient Greeks by the Slavs and other non-Hellenic races, a view which in more moderate form had earlier been hinted at by Leake in 1814,² won both praise and condemnation. K. B. Hase (16 March 1829) thought Fallmerayer's work provided a welcome stimulus and added that the young modern Greek kingdom could be supported without necessarily accepting the popular current ideas of an uninterrupted link between Pericles and Canaris or finding 'trait pour trait les anciens Spartiates dans les pirates de Maïna'.³ To the enthusiastic and unrealistic romanticism of European philhellenes such views were anathema, particularly in Fallmerayer's Bavarian circles where Ludwig I was boosting his son Otto's candidature for the throne of the newly emerging kingdom. Though in fact Otto himself later on seems to have become a Fallmerayer partisan, according to Finlay, who wrote in 1844 (probably to Leake) that the king 'believes all this balderdash' and thinks that the country is peopled with imaginary banditti descended from Slavonians and wonders that Sir Edmund Lyons does not study Fallmerayer's history of the Morea before talking to him of the state of the country.⁴ Finlay's own views are more moderately stated in his *History of Greece*.⁵ Though praising Fallmerayer's ability, he makes it clear that he considers his view 'disproved',⁶ and in spite of the more recent 'neo-fallmerayerism' of R. J. H. Jenkins and C. Mango, modern scholars would generally agree.⁷

Finlay and Fallmerayer probably had most in common in their shared enthusiasm for Trebizond. In 1824 Fallmerayer had

2. W. M. Leake, *Researches in Greece* (London, 1814), pp. 380ff. and *passim*.

3. Cited by R. G. E. (Saint-René) Tallandrier, 'Publicistes modernes de l'Allemagne. Jacques-Philippe Fallmerayer', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, XLII (=XXXII^e année-seconde période, 1862), 132.

4. J. M. Hussey, *The Finlay Papers* (British School of Archaeology at Athens, Supplementary Volume No. 9 [London, 1974]; cited hereafter as *Papers*), p. 97, B 7 (23). These papers are as yet almost entirely unpublished, but I plan to include the more important ones in my Memoir on Finlay.

5. *History of Greece*, IV: *Medieval Greece and the Empire of Trebizond*, ed. H. F. Tozer (Oxford, 1877; first published in 1850; cited hereafter as *History*), esp. pp. 1-37.

6. *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

7. See the recent comments of I. Dujčev, *Cronaca di Monemvasia*: introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e note (Istituto di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, *Testi*, 12, [Palermo, 1976]), pp. XIff.

won a prize offered by the Danish Academy for an essay on Trebizond and this was followed in 1827 by his history of the empire of Trebizond⁸ and then in 1843–4 he published Trebizuntine material from Cardinal Bessarion's collection in Venice and from St. Dionysius on Mount Athos.⁹ Perhaps more important were Fallmerayer's travels in the east Mediterranean. With the help of his patron General Ostermann he made three major journeys, 1831–4, 1840–2 and 1847–8. From 1839 onwards he published descriptions of his experiences in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, later collected in book form under the titles of *Fragmente aus dem Orient*¹⁰ and *Neue Fragmente*.¹¹ Fallmerayer arrived in Trebizond in August 1840, exploring the buildings and surrounding country and returning to Constantinople at the end of October in that year.¹² His fine descriptions of the still standing, though often half ruined, churches and monasteries, his appreciation of the unspoilt natural beauty and luxuriant vegetation of the countryside, give to his *Fragmente* a brilliant literary quality as well as providing some historical evidence on material which had vanished only a few years later when Finlay visited the same sites.

On 18 May 1850 Finlay wrote to Leake that he had finished his Trebizuntine section of the history of the Greek nation. 'But before copying some portions I am resolved to visit some places, particularly the neighbourhood of Trebizond.'¹³ He was there from 20 June to 3 July, following in Fallmerayer's tracks and he gives a fairly detailed description in one of his Journals, frequently comparing notes with Fallmerayer's account in the

8. *Geschichte des Kaiserthums von Trapezunt* (Munich, 1827; cited hereafter as *Geschichte*). Finlay's own copy, like most of the books from his personal library, has pencilled marginalia, unfortunately often somewhat pruned by the binder.

9. *Original-Fragmente, Chroniken, Inschriften und anderes Materiale zur Geschichte des Kaiserthums Trapezunt* (Munich, 1843–4), Pts. I and II, Abh. d. k. bayr. Akad. d. Wiss., Hist. Cl. Bd. III, Abtheilung III, and Bd. IV, Abth. 1. [cited hereafter as *Original-Fragmente*].

10. Originally published in 2 vols., Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1845; 2nd ed. with additions and introd. by G. M. Thomas (Stuttgart, 1877); various selections have subsequently appeared (unless otherwise stated, cited hereafter as *Fragmente* from Thomas' 2nd ed.).

11. In the *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. G. M. Thomas, vol. I (Leipzig, 1861).

12. See *Fragmente*, pp. 1–199.

13. *Papers*, p. 98, B 7 (33).

Fragmente. Though he characteristically says that he has ‘no taste to describe feelings’, even his Scottish reserve could not contain itself over the vivid flowers and shrubs and trees noted on the long ride up the river valley with the torrent thundering like artillery in its wild fury. ‘It is impossible’, he wrote, ‘not to be in ecstasy at such scenery.’ And then at the end of the ten-hour ride he reached the superbly situated monastery of Sumelas, an immense wooden pile of buildings with its galleries and cells clinging like swallows’ nests to the precipices.¹⁴

Finlay’s own work on Trebizond which friends were urging him to publish in 1850¹⁵ went to press in February 1851¹⁶ and was reviewed in that year by Fallmerayer in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*.¹⁷ In his lucid and concise examination of the fortunes of the Trebizuntine empire Finlay frequently refers to Fallmerayer’s work and handsomely acknowledges his debt to him, praising his judgement and perceptive observations. Though Fallmerayer somewhat sadly remarks in his review that the Germans toiled and others built with the stones which they had hewn, he commends Finlay’s independent approach, historical insight and elegant presentation, praising the work ‘as worthy of a Gibbon’ and noting how its author offered his criticisms of others as ‘a complete gentleman’ would, in contrast to the bitter crude feuding in Germany. Obviously friends had suggested to Fallmerayer that he might well have produced this work but he had replied that he was worn out with being attacked—had he written such a book he would of course have treated the racial problem from the unpopular point of view—and he added that it was dangerous to have ideas in Germany unless supported by armed force. In such criticism of Finlay as he makes, he is more moderate in expounding his racial theory than in his original dynamic statement.

Both Finlay and Fallmerayer tend to intersperse their writings with comments on the current political situation as they saw it. Finlay’s life was to some extent bound up with the fortunes of

14. *Papers*, p. 32, A 14 (Journal, pp. 45ff.).

15. *Papers*, p. 78, B 6 (53) and (54).

16. *Papers*, p. 68, B 3 (1), (2), (4), (5).

17. Reprinted in *Gesammelte Werke*, III, pp. 298–330. Finlay mentions the *Augsburger* review (*Papers*, p. 129, E 1, p. 13) but does not seem to have a copy of it in his review book, which was unusual for him.

the development of the new Greek state, though by no means exclusively.¹⁸ Fallmerayer, the liberal, the anti-clerical, outspoken and often rashly so, was far more deeply involved on at least two issues. He passionately longed for a united Germany and instead of quickly and quietly taking up the chair of history in Munich offered him in 1847, he rushed back from his travels in early 1848 to become a member of the disastrous Frankfurt parliament, following its remnants to Stuttgart, and was consequently banned from Germany for two years and lost his chair. At the same time he was an ardent supporter of the Ottoman Empire, seeing in the Russians a threat to the Balkans and to Europe—again an unpopular move in Bavarian circles, and a fear not shared by Finlay whose expressive ‘bah!’ in the margin of his own copy of the *Fragmente* was his comment on Fallmerayer’s Russian views.¹⁹ These two threads—liberalism in Germany and a pro-Turkish foreign policy—constantly reappear in all his writings historical or literary. And to make matters worse in late 1850 and early 1851 he became embroiled with the Bavarian Academy and for a time lost his membership (he had been elected an ordinary member in 1835). This episode is either omitted or glossed over in accounts of Fallmerayer’s life, but it had a profound effect on him and does also reflect his hasty, often sarcastic, temperament. In three articles in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* of January 1851 he rather maliciously castigated the orations given in November 1850 by two members of the Academy, in particular that of Ringseis whose speech he regarded as ignorant unscholarly waffle.²⁰ A half apology—eine Erklärung—which he was persuaded to make did not save his membership, though the opposition to him won only by a small majority. His Diary for these weeks reflects his agony of mind, his uneven temperament, his

18. See J. M. Hussey, ‘George Finlay in perspective—a centenary reappraisal’, *ABSA*, LXX (1975), 135–44.

19. *Fragmente*, I, 1st ed., p. 22 (Finlay’s copy).

20. The episode is examined in detail by F. Babinger, *Der Akademiezweist um Jakob-Philipp Fallmerayer (1851). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaft unter Maximilian II.*, Bay. Ak. d. Wiss. Philosoph.-Hist. Klasse, Sitz. 1959, Heft 5. See also H. Seidler, *Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer’s geistige Entwicklung. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts.*, Abh. d. Bay Ak. d. Wiss., Philosoph.-Hist. Klasse, N. F. Heft 26 (1947), p. 134.

susceptibility to public opinion, his obstinate clinging to the views he thought right, his deeply ingrained pessimism.²¹

It is against this background and temperament that what appears to be his only surviving letter to Finlay must be read.²² Dated 13 March 1851 it comes after the failure of the Frankfurt Parliament, and at a time when Fallmerayer was still smarting from the stinging reverses of the Ringseis episode. Though the Finlay papers record no personal reminiscences of meeting with Fallmerayer, indeed nothing concerning him except on the topics of Trebizond and the Slavic problem, it is clear that they corresponded and it sounds from the letter as though they may have met when Fallmerayer was in Athens in 1847 (and in the *Fragmente* he says that he found it dusty, dirty, scorched up and without running water). Possibly from the reference to Trebizond in the letter, Finlay may have sent Fallmerayer his findings on his own journey there in 1850. There are certainly notes both in Finlay's *Journal* and in the marginalia on his copy of *Fragmente aus dem Orient* on the Trebizuntine frescoes which Fallmerayer had seen. The comparative informality and warmth of the letter to Finlay suggest some measure of friendship. It also reflects Fallmerayer's acute lack of self-confidence, the nomadic life forced upon him by circumstances and perhaps by restless inclinations, bringing into high relief the contrasting temperaments of the two men, the one of Tyrolese peasant origin who on his most distant travels never forgot the high alpine fields of his childhood, the other brought up in the well-to-do country house of his uncle the Lord Provost of Glasgow who always remembered with longing the Scottish mountains of his boyhood home in Argyll and who had so much more stability and staying power. The portraits of the two men in old

21. See *Schriften und Tagebücher*, ed. H. Feigl and E. Molden, vol. 2 (Munich and Leipzig, 1913), pp. 348ff. The diaries are in the Museum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck, and only short extracts appear to be given in this book.

22. See *Papers*, pp. 78–9, 136 (55: note that this entry should read 'Holy Mountain (Athos)'). This, as far as I know, unpublished, letter in Fallmerayer's hand is among George Finlay's papers now in the possession of the British School at Athens. I am grateful to the Committee of Management for their permission to edit and publish these papers. I am also particularly indebted to Dr. F. J. Stopp of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, for his help in deciphering the crabbed hand of the Gothic script in which this particular letter is written.

age speak for themselves, revealing the contrast between the broad-browed, haunted haggard-looking Fallmerayer, and the sturdy serenity of the alert clear-eyed elderly Finlay.²³

München 19 März 1851.

Theuerster, Geehrtester Herr,

Das Schreiben mit welchem Sie mich unter dem 12 August vorigen Jahres beehrten, ist mir nach langen Irrfahrten seiner Zeit dahier richtig zugekommen.

Reisen, Krankheiten und andere Verdriesslichkeiten aller Art werden and müssen das späte Eintreffen meiner Antwort zum Theil entschuldigen.

Die Gemüthsruhe der früherer Zeiten und die warme Theilnahme, mit der ich noch während meines letzten Aufenthaltes in Athen alles umfasste,²⁴ was Trapezund, Kolchis, Sumelas²⁵ und Hagion-Oros²⁶ berührte, sind unter dem Drucke des politischen Unglücks und des völligen Bankerottes des deutschen Vaterlandes für immer aus meiner Brust verschwunden.

Ich schäme mich, aber ich gestehe es doch aufrichtig, wie die Dinge jetzt stehen, habe ich alles Interesse an meinen Trapezuntischen Lucubrationen verloren und die eben so geistreiche als verbindliche Mittheilung über den 'Mythic hero' so wie über die nachsichtsvolle Milde einer eben so schönen als geistreichen Fama aus Trapezund vermehren noch die Traurigkeit und die Melancholie des verlorenen Paradieses.

23. Lithograph of Fallmerayer by F. Hickman from the portrait collection of the Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, reproduced in *Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer. Byzanz und das Abendland. Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. E. Mika (Vienna, 1943), p. 192. A photograph of Finlay in old age prefaces his *History*.

24. May 1847.

25. See above, notes 11 and 13. Sumelas is to the south of Trebizond. See also G. Miller and D. Talbot Rice, *Byzantine Painting at Trebizond* (London, 1936), pp. 144ff. and D. Talbot Rice, 'Notes on some religious buildings in the city and vilayet of Trebizond', *B*, V (1929), 72–7. On Mount Sumelas in Colchis, see also *Original-Fragmente*, I, pp. 49ff. and *passim*, and on the foundation of Sumelas, R. M. Dawkins, *The Monks of Athos* (London, 1936), pp. 159ff.

26. See *Fragmente*, II, 1st ed., pp. 1–140 (2nd ed., pp. 233–326). Fallmerayer's return journey from Constantinople to Thessalonica was via the Holy Mountain (Athos).

Sie sehen, ich bin noch krank und folglich nicht verantwortlich für den düsteren und trostlosen Inhalt meines Briefes.

‘Alte höllische Hexen’ müssen auf Theoskepastos²⁷ schon öfter Szenen der Barberei geliefert haben und ich bin überzeugt, dass Fratzenbilder und Inschriften, wie ich sie im Vestibulum der Klosterkirche gesehen, aber nicht abgezeichnet habe,²⁸ von dem correcten Styl der alten Trapezuntischen Hofmaler aus der Comnenen-Zeit vielleicht eben so weit entfernt waren als das rohe Gepinsel, von dem Ihr Brief erzählt.

An Zeichnungen irgend einer Art habe ich aus Trebizond und Umgegend soviel als gar nichts zurückgebracht und eine mangelhafte Bleistift-Skizze, welche das Porträt der kaiserlichen Begründer des St. Dionysiusklosters auf Hagion-Oros²⁹ wiedergeben soll, ist das einzige Produkt dieser Art, was ich unter alten Papieren gefunden habe.

Lebe ich noch eine Zeit lang und komme ich wieder zu Kraft und Arbeitslust, könnte ich besagte Skizze vielleicht für eine zweite Auflage der Fragmente in Bereitschaft halten. Für ein grösseres Unternehmen, wie Sie mir es anzudeuten scheinen, fehlt eine hinlänglich briete Unterlage.

Bruchstücke aus Lazaros the Σκευόφυλαξ³⁰ und aus anderen MSSC vom Berg Athos sind in den historischen Denkschriften der Akademie d<er> W<issenschaften> in München abgedruckt unter dem Titel: Original-Fragmente, Chroniken, Inschriften und anderer Materialien zur Geschichte des Kaisertums Trapezunt. Zwei Abtheilungen, 1843 und 1844.

Zu der graulichen Verwirrung meiner kleinen bibliothek

27. On the Panagia Theoskepastos, see *Original-Fragmente*, I, pp. 66–7 and II, p. 96; G. Miller and D. Talbot Rice, op. cit., pp. 40–65 and p. 116; and D. Talbot Rice, *B*, V (1959), 60–1.

28. Fallmerayer did, however, copy some of the inscriptions.

29. The monastery of St. Dionysius was founded by John Alexius Comnenus, the golden bull dating from 1375. See *Original-Fragmente*, I, pp. 40ff. and 87ff. (text). See also *History*, IV, pp. 384–5 and R. M. Dawkins, op. cit., pp. 155ff.

30. On Lazaros the Skeuophylax, fl. under the Grand-Comnenus Alexius III (1349–90), see *Original-Fragmente*, I, pp. 9ff., 17ff. and 71ff. The MS. was found in the Dionysiou monastery.

in Folge wiederholter Wanderungen ist kein Exemplar aufzufinden; ich kann aber nicht glauben dass Ihnen diese Armseligkeiten von irgend einem Nutzen in Ihrem angekündigten Unternehmen wären.

Bei der intimen Allianz indessen zwischen der Münchener Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Gast-schule in Athen sind unsere Denkschriften höchst-wahrscheinlich in der griechischen Hauptstadt selbst hinterlegt und jeden Augenblick zu Ihrer Disposition.

Ausser diesen unbedeutenden Zusätzen ist neuerlich in Deutschland auch nicht das Geringste über Trapezunt oder Hagion-Oros im Druck erschienen und ich bin wahrscheinlich der erste und der letzte, der seine Zeit über dieses unbekannte und romanhafte Imperium verloren hat.

Mit vorzüglicher und aufrichtiger Hochachtung

Geehrtester, Theuerster Herr

Ihr ergebenster

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